

### *Benefits set to Expire for Thousands of Hudson Valley Residents*

**Kingston, NY** - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today visited the Ulster County Office of Employment & Training to discuss the urgent need for an emergency extension of unemployment insurance for those who face imminent loss of benefits. Hinchey has voted repeatedly to extend the benefits, which began expiring for millions of workers in May. While Hudson Valley job seekers filing new claims will remain eligible to receive unemployment insurance, those who have already received the insurance for the maximum allowable time will continue to lose coverage unless an emergency extension bill is passed in the Senate.

"Nearly eight million have people lost their jobs in the economic downturn," said Hinchey. "While we are beginning to see positive signs of recovery, too many Hudson Valley residents remain unemployed. Currently, for any one job opening, there are five job seekers. Those who are continuing to look for work are counting on these benefits to put food on the table and make it through these tough times. That's why I've voted repeatedly to extend unemployment benefits and why I'm going to continue fighting to extend these benefits until there is a significant decrease in the unemployment rate."

On July 1st, Hinchey voted to pass the Restoration of Emergency Unemployment Compensation Act, H.R. 5618, which would extend the Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) and Extended Benefits programs through November 30, 2010. This bill, which would also retroactively restore benefits to people who started losing their benefits as early as the end of May, now awaits action in the Senate.

Hinchey has voted several additional times to extend unemployment benefits. While Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY) and Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) have also worked tirelessly to extend the benefits, the Senate has failed to pass a bill due to opposition from a few Senators:

- In the fall of 2009, Hinchey voted to pass legislation (H.R. 3548) to provide up to 13 additional weeks of unemployment benefits to workers in high unemployment states who are about to run out of benefits. A few Senators delayed action on this bill for more than a month, leaving 500,000 without benefits.

- In February, Hinchey voted to pass emergency legislation to extend expiring unemployment insurance benefits for 30 days, but one Senator singlehandedly blocked passage of this emergency measure, resulting in a three-day shut down of unemployment benefits for more than one million Americans.
- In March, another Senator blocked passage of a crucial package of expiring provisions, including extended unemployment insurance benefits.
- In June, Hinchey voted to pass the American Jobs and Closing Tax Loopholes Act (H.R. 4213), commonly known as the "extenders package" which would extend unemployment benefits for six months. Just a handful of Senators on four separate occasions blocked efforts to move forward on this crucial job creating legislation.

The Congressional Budget Office has found extending these benefits to be one of the most cost-effective and fast-acting ways to stimulate the economy. Over 1.7 million people nationwide, including 143,000 living in New York, have lost unemployment insurance between the end of May and July 3. Since 1959, the government has never allowed extended unemployment benefits to expire when the national unemployment rate is above 7.2 percent. The current rate stands at 9.3 percent.